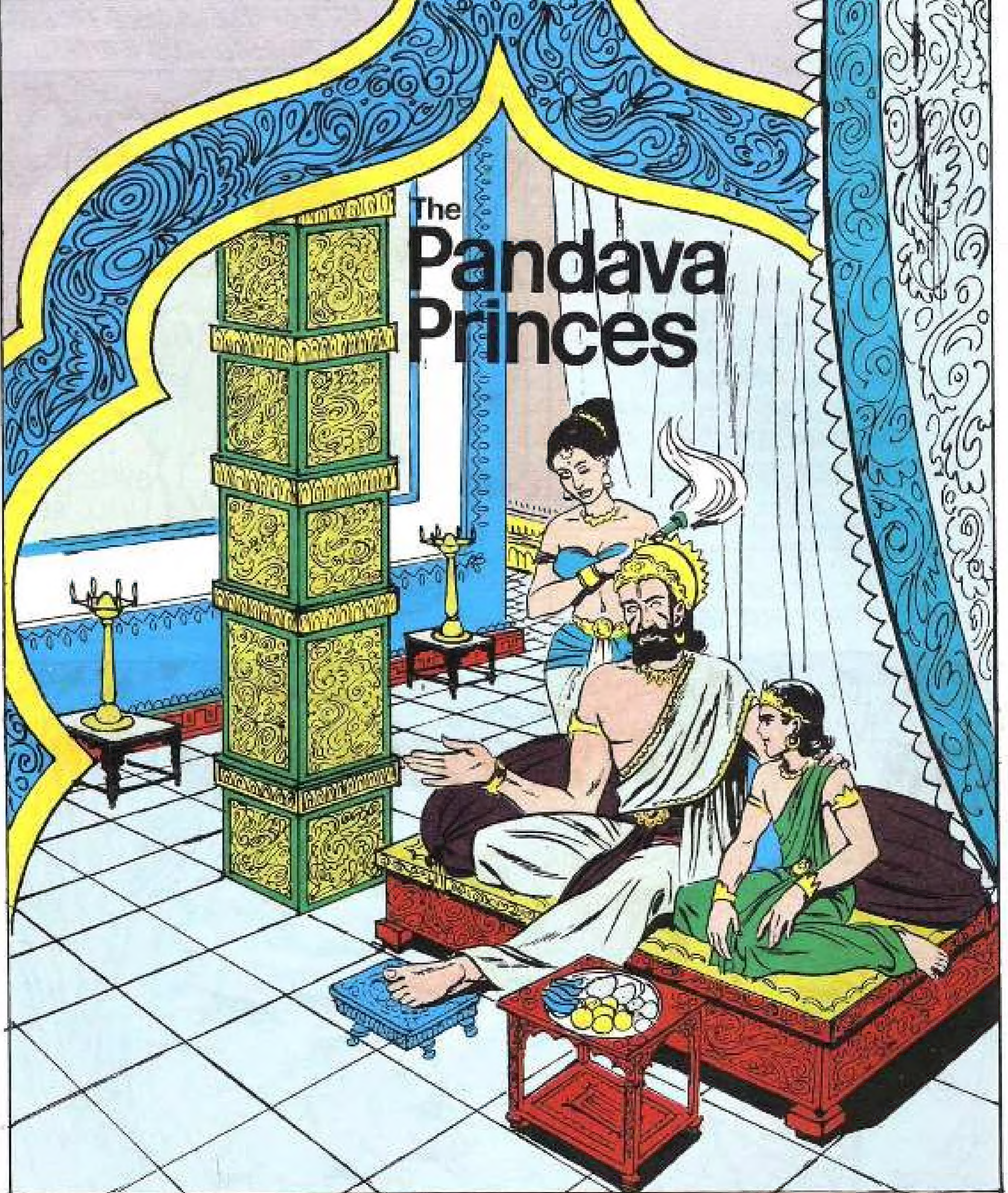


THE PANDAVA PRINCES

PANDU'S FIVE BRAVE SONS

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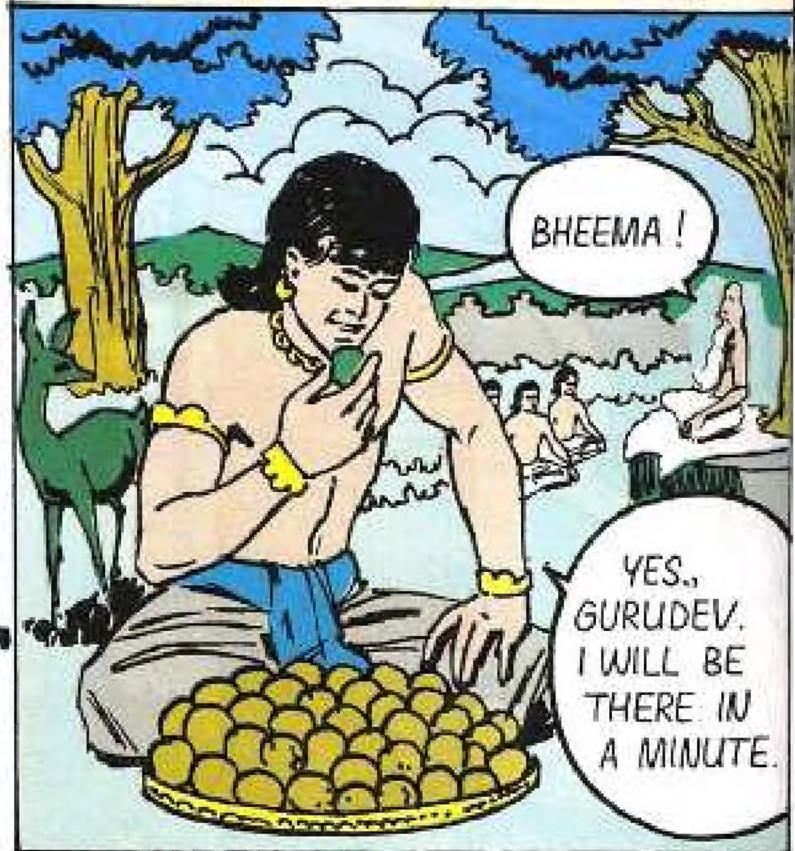
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THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, INDIA WAS DIVIDED INTO MANY SOVEREIGN STATES. ONE OF THEM WAS HASTINAPURA, RULED BY THE BLIND KING DHRITARASHTRA. HE HAD A HUNDRED SONS, WHO WERE CALLED THE KAURAVAS. THE ELDEST WAS DURYODHANA.

DHRITARASHTRA'S BROTHER PANDU, HAD RULED THE KINGDOM EARLIER, BUT HE HAD RETIRED TO THE FOREST, BECAUSE OF CONTINUED ILLNESS. PANDU HAD TWO WIVES–KUNTI AND MADRI. THERE IN COURSE OF TIME, THREE SONS WERE BORN TO KUNTI–YUDHISHTHIRA, BHEEMA AND ARJUNA. MADRI HAD TWO SONS–NAKULA AND SAHADEVA. TOGETHER THEY WERE CALLED THE PANDAVAS.

THE GREAT SAGES OF THE JUNGLE TAUGHT THE PANDAVAS TO READ AND WRITE.



THE HARD JUNGLE LIFE MADE THEM STURDY AND FEARLESS.

WHEN PANDU DIED, MADRI BURNT HERSELF ON THE PYRE. SAGE VYASA CAME TO CONSOLE KUNTI.







ON THEIR WAY—

ARJUNA ! WILL WE GET SUCH A WARM WELCOME AT HASTINAPURA ALSO ?

VICTORY TO THE SONS OF PANDU !


AT THE PALACE, THE BLIND KING DHRITARASHTRA WELCOMED THEM WITH A SHOW OF LOVE.
COME, MY SONS.

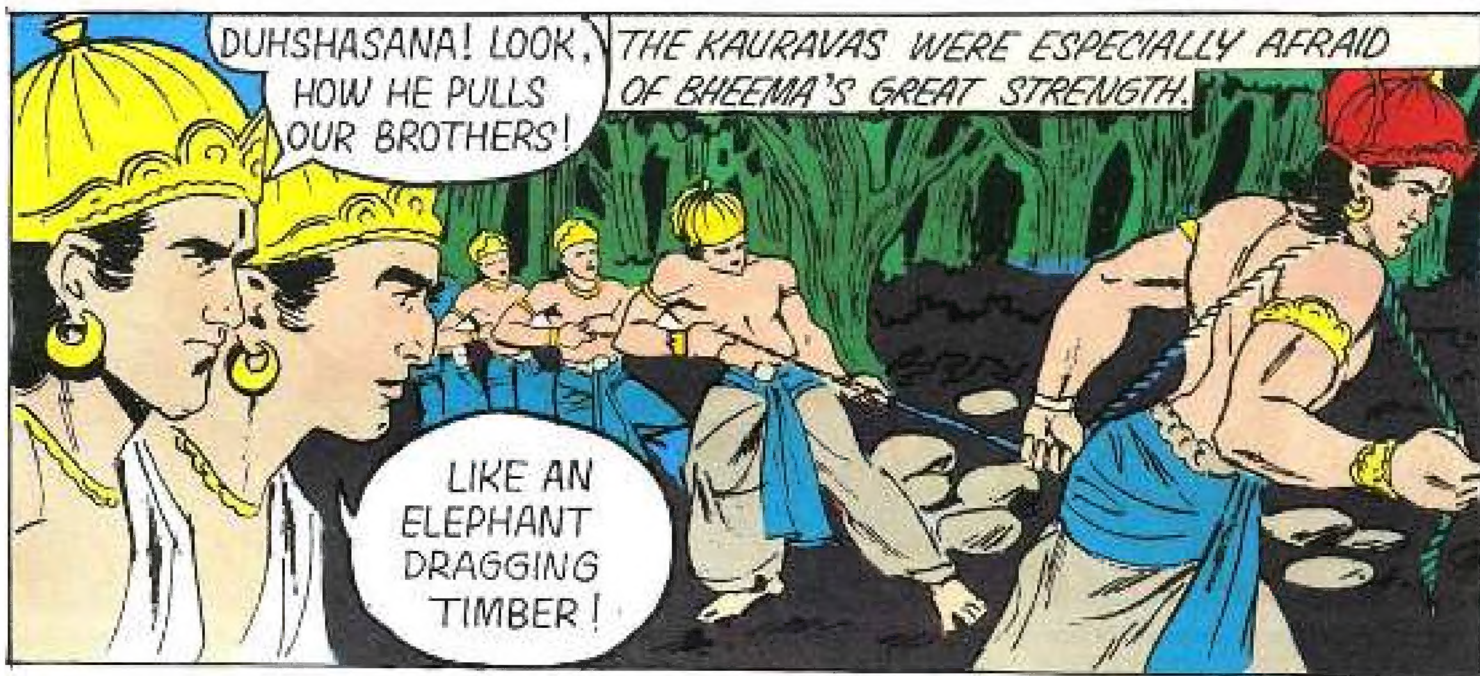

SONS INDEED! AND WHO ARE WE?


BHEESHMA, THEIR GREAT GRAND UNCLE, LOVED THEM AS MUCH AS HE DID THE KAURAVAS.
DUHSHASANA! DURYODHANA! LIVE TOGETHER AS BROTHERS WITH THE PANDAVAS.


BE WORTHY SONS OF THE GREAT PANDU.
VIDURA TOO, BLESSED THEM.


AS THE DAYS PASSED, DURYODHANA'S HATRED OF THE PANDAVAS GREW.
THIS YUDHISHTHIRA MAY ONE DAY BECOME THE CROWN PRINCE.
AN HONOUR WHICH IS YOURS BY RIGHT, DURYODHANA!


THE KAURAVAS ENVIED THE FIVE PRINCES.
SEE, HOW ARJUNA NEVER MISSES HIS MARK.
AND LOOK AT NAKULA! RIDING A HORSE!


DUHSHASANA! LOOK, HOW HE PULLS OUR BROTHERS!
THE KAURAVAS WERE ESPECIALLY AFRAID OF BHEEMA'S GREAT STRENGTH.
LIKE AN ELEPHANT DRAGGING TIMBER!


THE MORE FEATS HE PERFORMED, THE MORE HE WAS HATED.
BHEEMA HAS BEEN UNDER WATER FOR QUITE SOME TIME. I HOPE HE DOES NOT COME UP


DON'T SHAKE THE TREE, BHEEMA. WE MAY FALL DOWN!
LIKE DRIED LEAVES, EH!

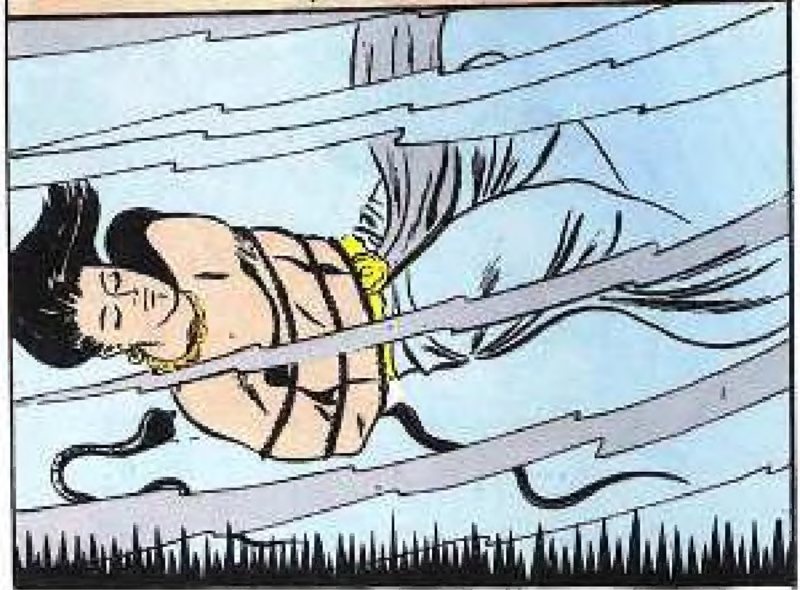

WE WILL THROW THIS BOOR INTO THE GANGA
DURING A PICNIC ON THE RIVER-


A GOOD IDEA, DURYODHANA, BUT LET US POISON HIS FOOD FIRST.


THE POISONED FOOD MADE BHEEMA DROWSY.
YOU CAN REST AND COME LATER, BHEEMA ! WE ARE GOING AHEAD!
THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO FINISH BHEEMA !


THEY TIED BHEEMA AND THREW HIM INTO THE RIVER
THERE ARE IRON SPIKES AT THE BOTTOM . HE CAN'T ESCAPE.
AND POISONOUS SNAKES TOO.
LET US HURRY BEFORE SOMEONE FINDS OUT


NEAR THE PALACE GATES, YUDHISHTHIRA MET DURYODHANA.
WHERE IS BHEEMA?
HE MUST BE IN THE PALACE. HE LEFT MUCH BEFORE US.


IN THE RIVER, BHEEMA ESCAPED THE IRON SPIKES, BUT THE SNAKES BIT HIM.


THE SNAKE POISON ACTED AGAINST THE POISONED FOOD WHICH HE HAD EATEN.
WHERE AM I?


HE TWITCHED HIS MUSCLES TILL THE BONDS BURST.


SOON HE CAME OUT OF THE WATER AND REACHED THE PALACE.
HELLO, DURYODHANA! THE SNAKES SEND YOU THEIR LOVE.
HOW DID HE SURVIVE?

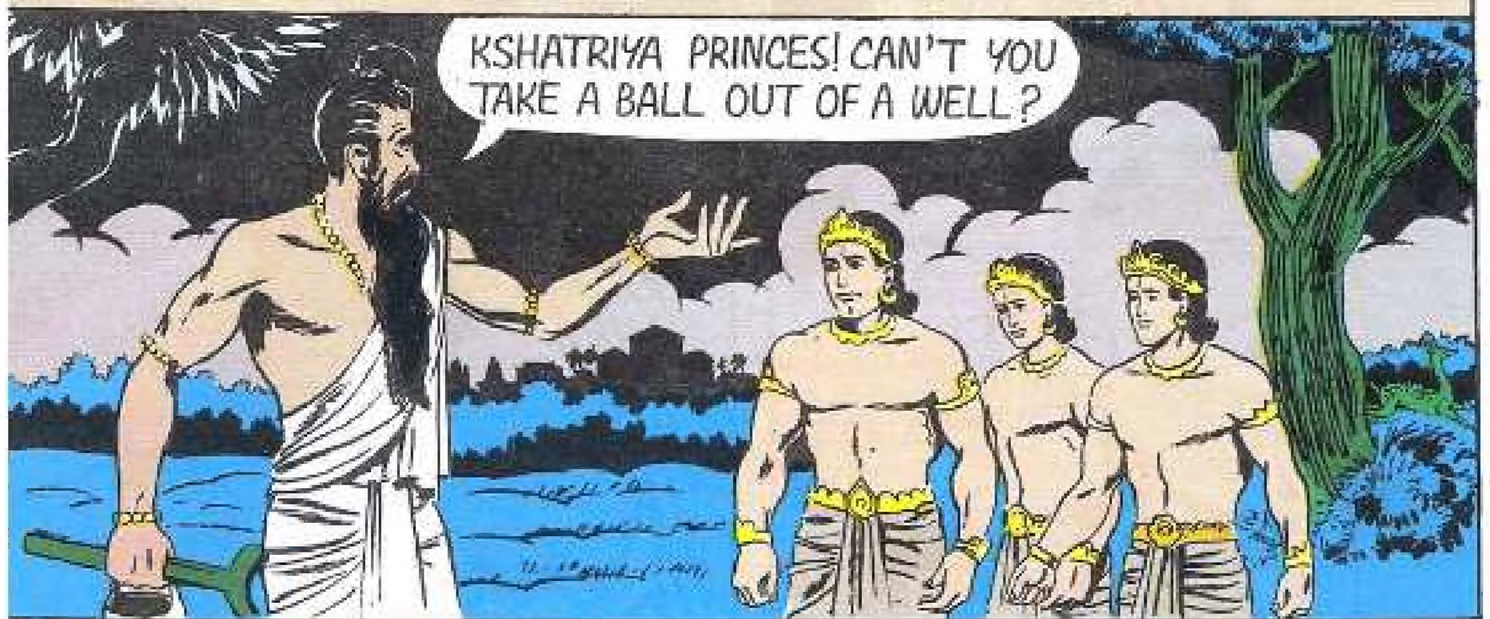

WHEN HE TOLD THE STORY TO HIS BROTHERS–
OH, BHEEMA! WE ARE HAPPY TO SEE YOU BACK.
THERE IS NO POINT IN SPREADING ILL-WILL. DON'T TALK OF THIS TO ANYONE.

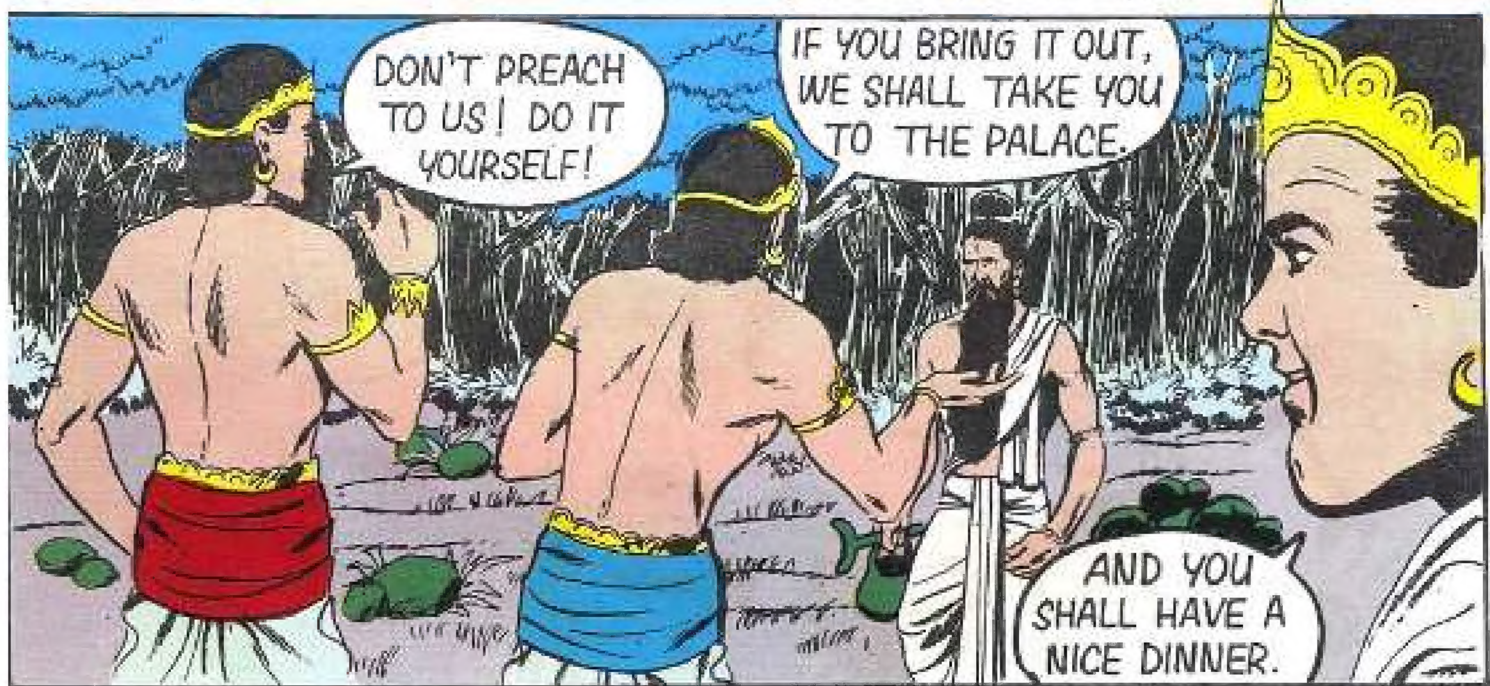

ONE DAY THEY WERE ALL PLAYING WITH A BALL ON AN OPEN GROUND OUTSIDE THE CITY
GOOD THROW, DURYODHANA!
THAT IS NOTHING. I'LL HURL IT INTO HEAVEN!


SEE?


FROM HEAVEN TO HELL
IT HAS FALLEN INTO THE WELL, BHEEMA!

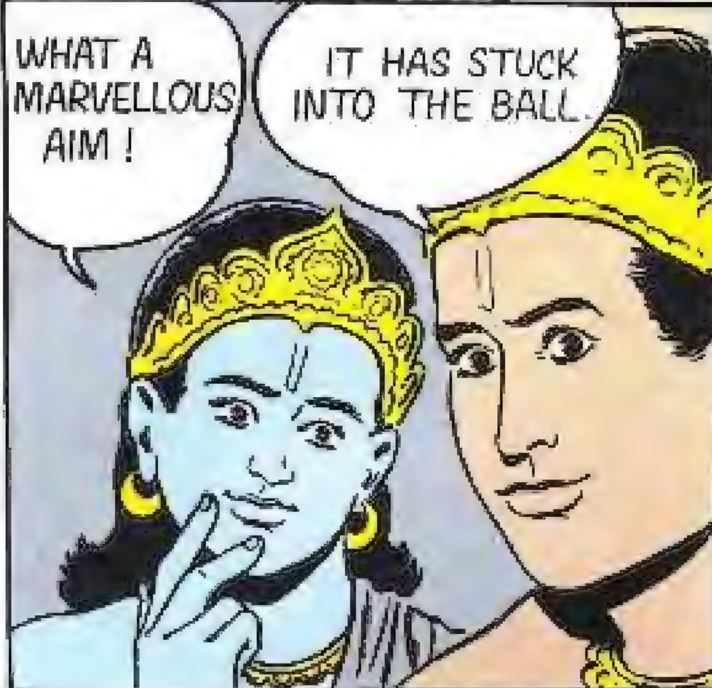

OH! MY RING HAS SLIPPED TOO.

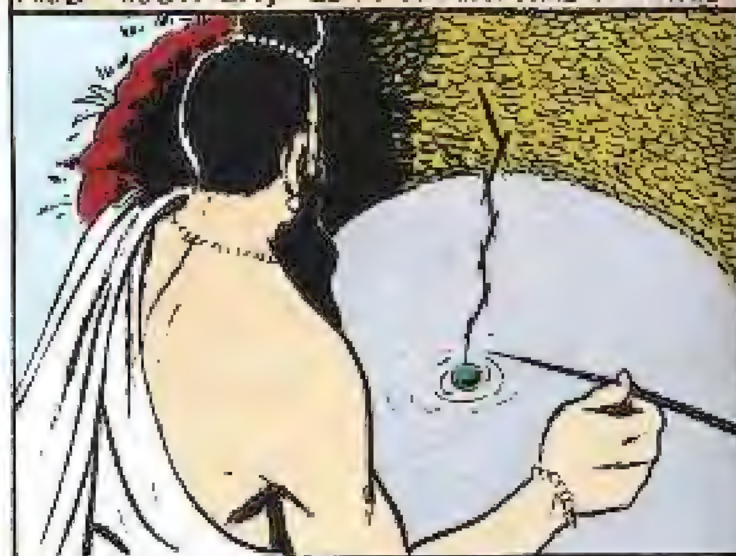

A POORLY-CLAD BRAHMAN APPROACHED THEM
KSHATRIYA PRINCES! CAN'T YOU TAKE A BALL OUT OF A WELL?


DON'T PREACH TO US! DO IT YOURSELF!
IF YOU BRING IT OUT, WE SHALL TAKE YOU TO THE PALACE.
AND YOU SHALL HAVE A NICE DINNER.


THE BRAHMAN UPROOTED A BLADE OF GRASS.

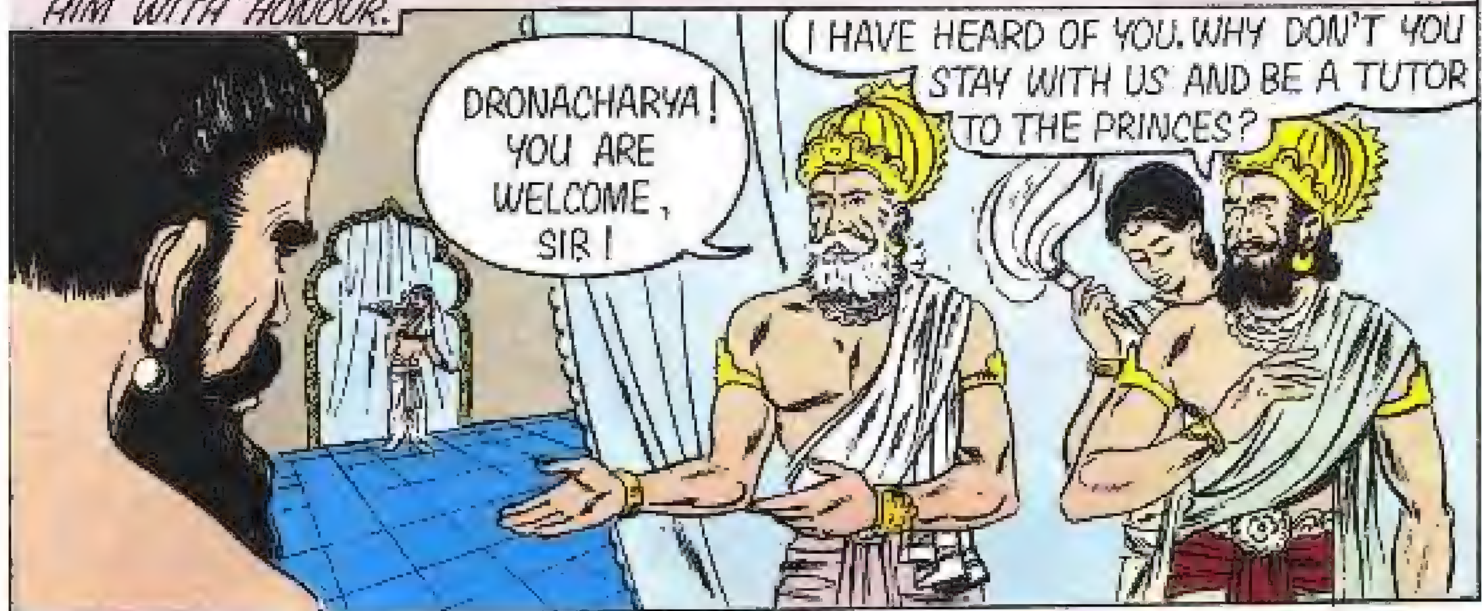

AND STRAIGHTENING IT, HE HURLED IT INTO THE WELL WITH TREMENDOUS FORCE.


WHAT A MARVELLOUS AIM !
IT HAS STUCK INTO THE BALL.


THE BRAHMAN DID THE SAME THING WITH ANOTHER BLADE - THEN ANOTHER - AND ANOTHER, TILL A CHAIN WAS FORMED.


WHEN HE PULLED THE CHAIN, THE BALL CAME OUT WITH IT.
A WONDERFUL FEAT !
BUT WHAT ABOUT MY RING ?
PLEASE LEND ME YOUR BOW AND ARROW.


THE BRAHMAN SENT AN ARROW STRAIGHT INTO THE WELL. IT BOUNCED BACK BRINGING WITH IT THE PRECIOUS RING.
AN AMAZING FEAT ! WILL YOU PLEASE COME WITH US TO THE PALACE ?

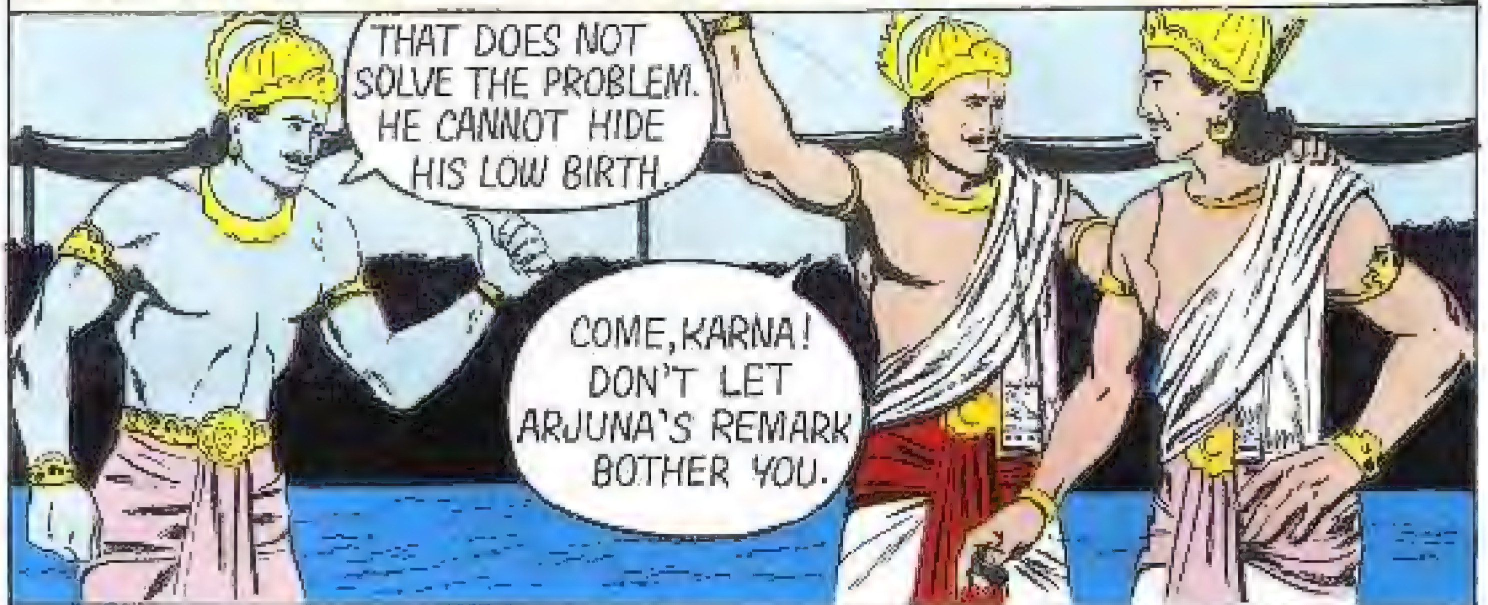

AT THE COURT, BHEESHMA RECOGNISED HIM. KING DHRITARASHTRA RECEIVED HIM WITH HONOUR.
DRONACHARYA! YOU ARE WELCOME, SIR!
I HAVE HEARD OF YOU. WHY DON'T YOU STAY WITH US AND BE A TUTOR TO THE PRINCES?

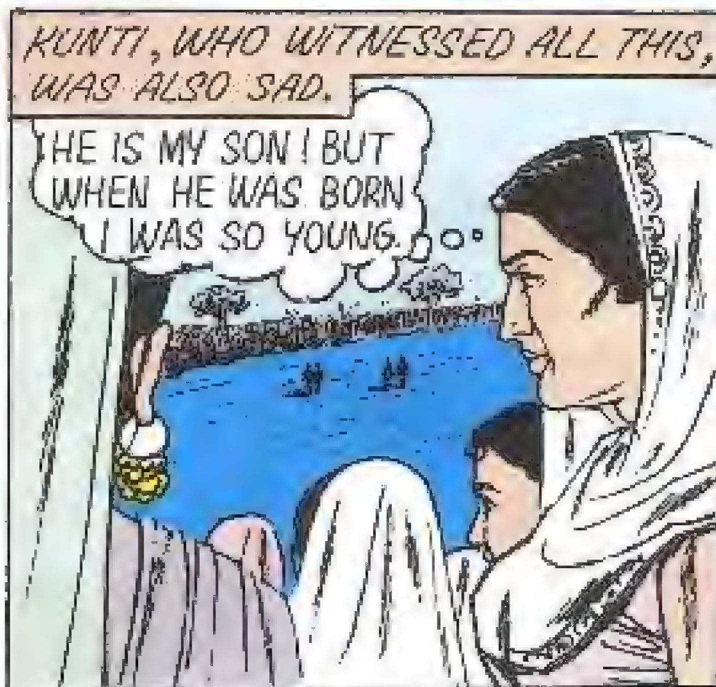

THE PRINCES LEARNT THE ARTS OF WAR FROM DRONACHARYA.
BHEEMA! YOU BOOR! THAT IS NOT THE WAY TO HOLD THE MACE.
THEN SAVE YOURSELF FROM MY BLOW AND PROVE IT.
LOOK AT THEM, YUDHISHTHIRA!
NO, BHEEMA! YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO LEARN, NOT FIGHT.


ONE DAY, DRONA HELD A CONTEST TO WHICH THE KING WAS INVITED. A BIG CROWD CAME TO WITNESS THE FEATS.
LOOK AT ARJUNA! HE NEVER MISSES HIS MARK!
I BET NO ONE CAN EQUAL HIM IN ARCHERY.


DURYODHANA INSTANTLY TOOK A LIKING FOR KARNA. BY BEFRIENDING HIM, HE WANTED TO HUMILIATE ARJUNA.
FRIEND KARNA! I PROMISE YOU THE KINGDOM OF ANGA.

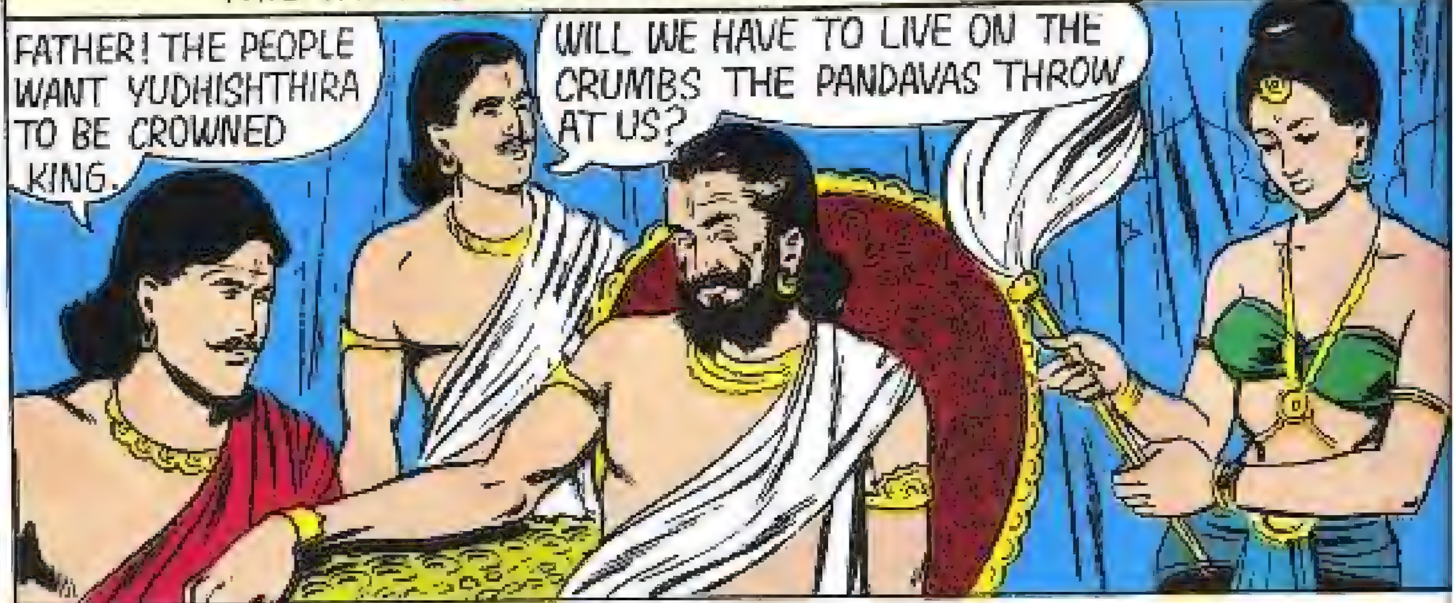

AFTER OBTAINING THE PERMISSION OF KING DHRITARASHTRA, KARNA WAS CROWNED THERE AND THEN.
HOW CAN I EVER REPAY YOUR KINDNESS, DURYODHANA!


THE QUICKNESS OF DURYODHANA'S ACTION ASTONISHED THE WHOLE GATHERING.
THAT DOES NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM. HE CANNOT HIDE HIS LOW BIRTH.
COME, KARNA! DON'T LET ARJUNA'S REMARK BOTHER YOU.

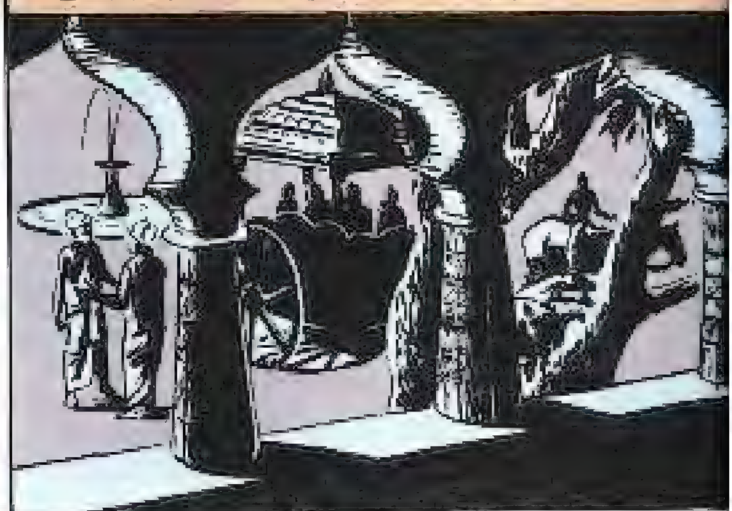

KUNTI, WHO WITNESSED ALL THIS, WAS ALSO SAD.
HE IS MY SON! BUT WHEN HE WAS BORN I WAS SO YOUNG.


"I CAST HIM AWAY. THIS CHARIOTEER MUST HAVE FOUND HIM"


THE PANDAVA PRINCES WERE LOVED ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.
WE WANT YUDHISHTHIRA TO BE THE KING!
THE PANDAVAS ARE BRAVE AND HONEST.
DURYODHANA IS TOO CRUEL TO BE THE KING.

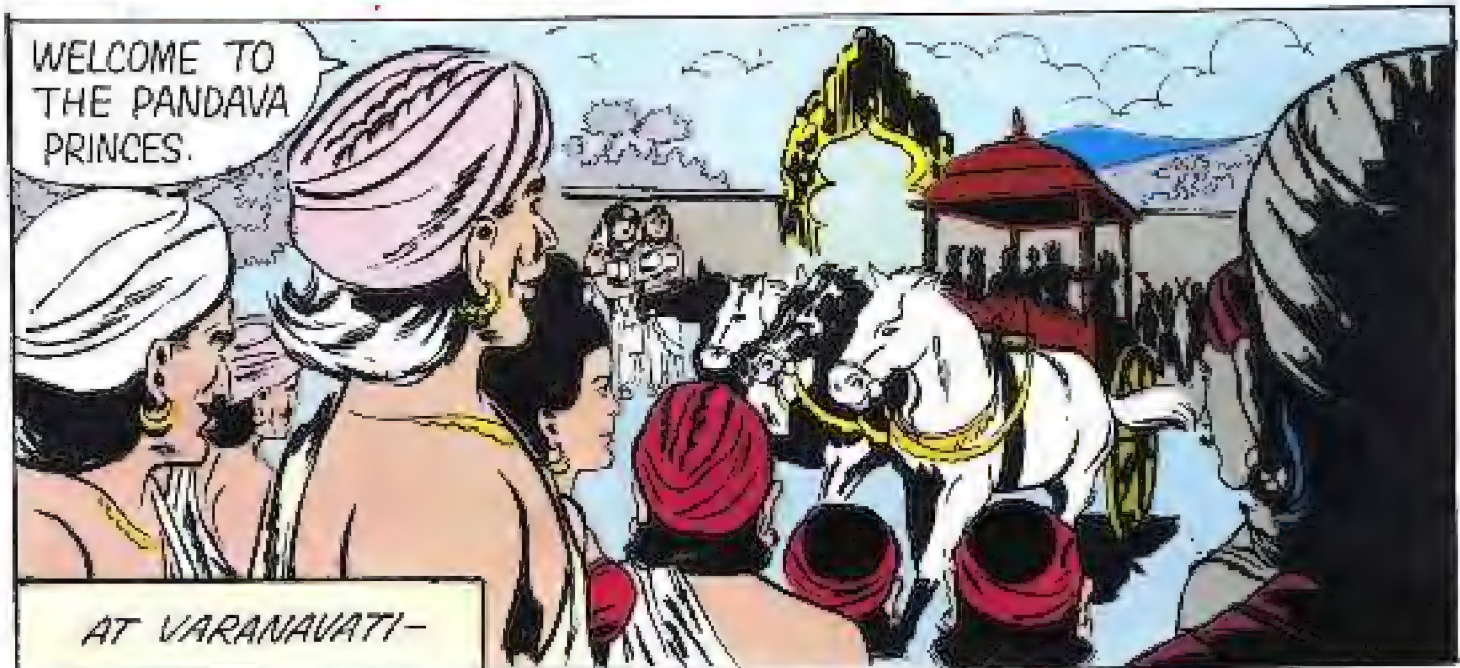

THIS TALK REACHED THE EARS OF DURYODHANA.
FATHER! THE PEOPLE WANT YUDHISHTHIRA TO BE CROWNED KING.
WILL WE HAVE TO LIVE ON THE CRUMBS THE PANDAVAS THROW AT US?

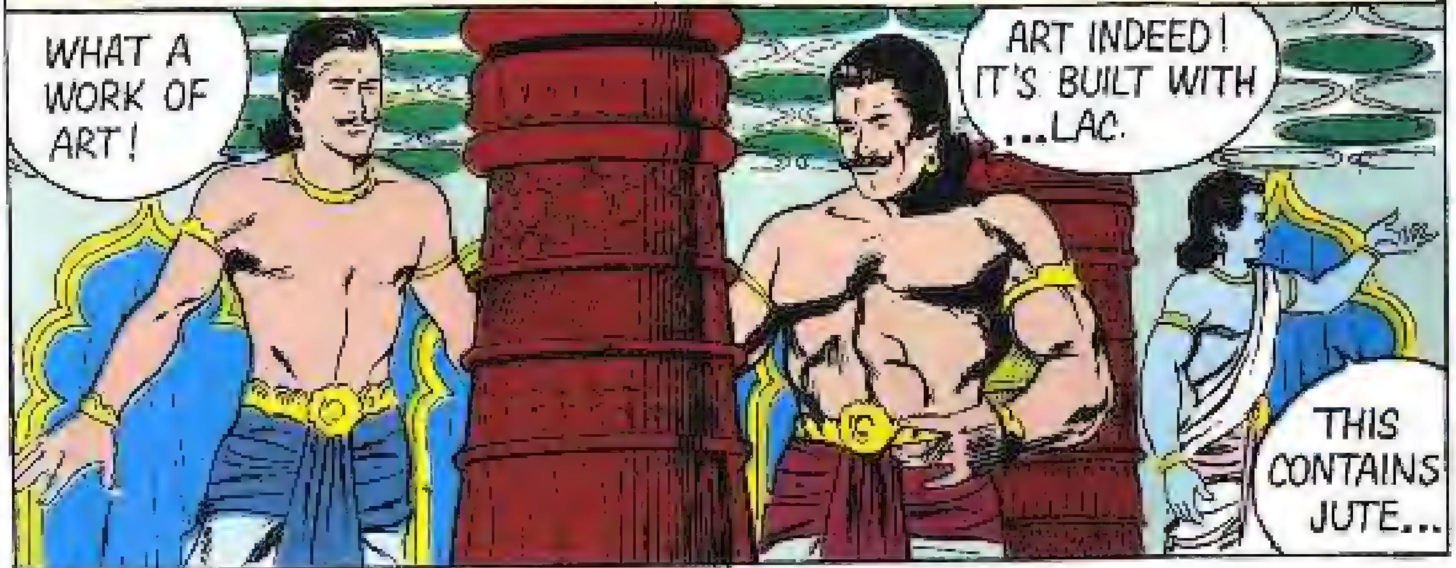

I SUGGEST, YOU SEND THEM AWAY ON SOME PRETEXT.
PREFERABLY, TO A PLACE FAR AWAY.

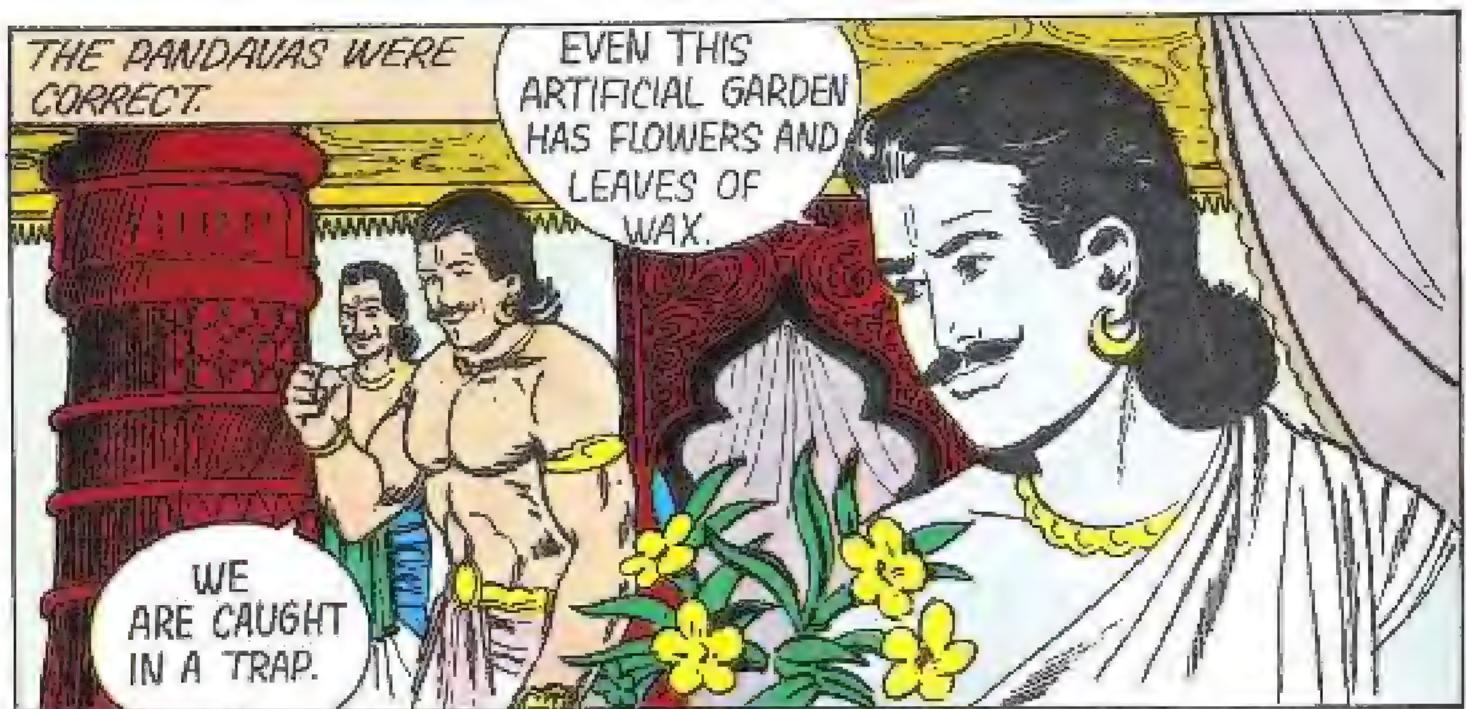

SO THE PANDAVAS WERE SENT TO VARANAVATI TO ATTEND THE FESTIVAL BEING HELD THERE.

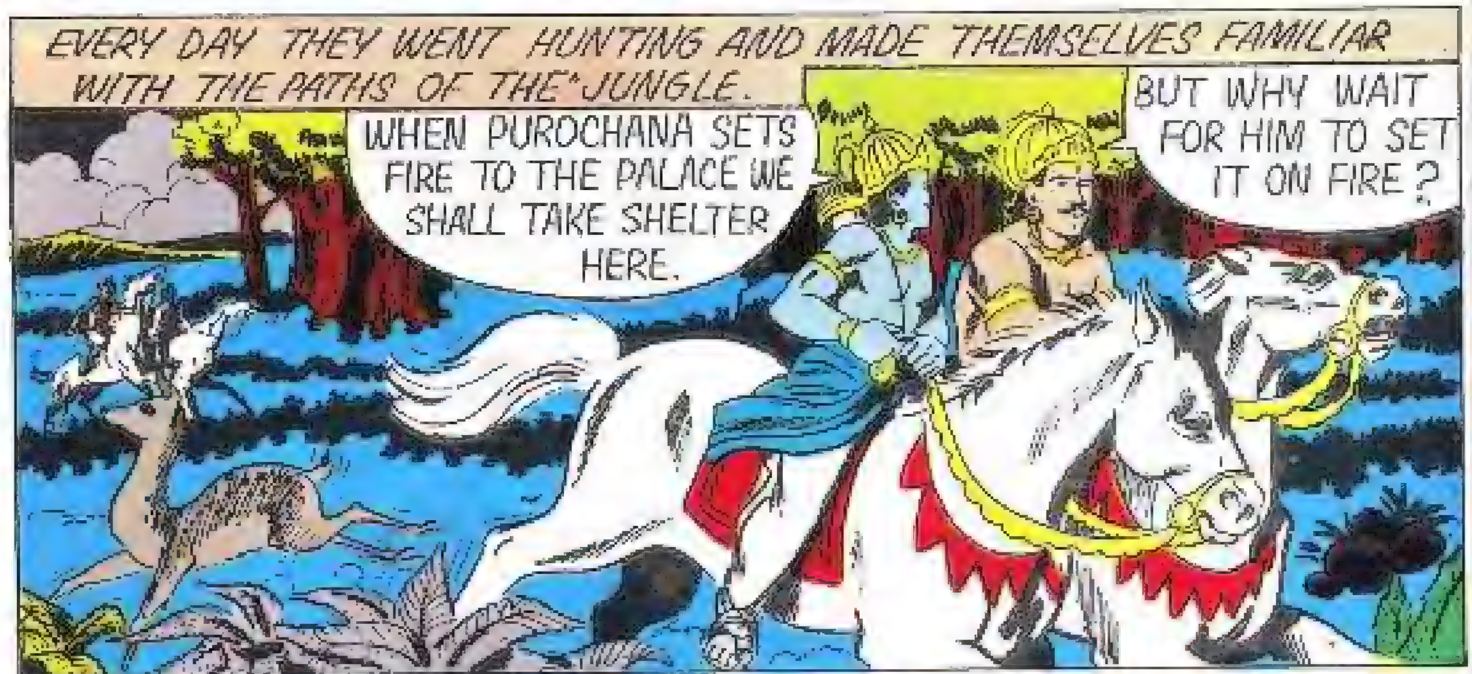

DURYODHANA WHISPERED SOMETHING IN THE EARS OF PUROCHANA, A CLEVER BUT SLY ARCHITECT.


VIDURA WARNED YUDHISHTHIRA TO BE CAREFUL.


AT VARANAVATI–
WELCOME TO THE PANDAVA PRINCES.


WHEN PUROCHANA FINISHED BUILDING A GRAND PALACE FOR THE PANDAVAS, THEY MOVED INTO IT.
WHAT A WORK OF ART!
ART INDEED! IT'S BUILT WITH ...LAC.
THIS CONTAINS JUTE...


THE PANDAVAS WERE CORRECT.
EVEN THIS ARTIFICIAL GARDEN HAS FLOWERS AND LEAVES OF WAX.
WE ARE CAUGHT IN A TRAP.


EVERY DAY THEY WENT HUNTING AND MADE THEMSELVES FAMILIAR WITH THE PATHS OF THE JUNGLE.
WHEN PUROCHANA SETS FIRE TO THE PALACE WE SHALL TAKE SHELTER HERE.
BUT WHY WAIT FOR HIM TO SET IT ON FIRE?

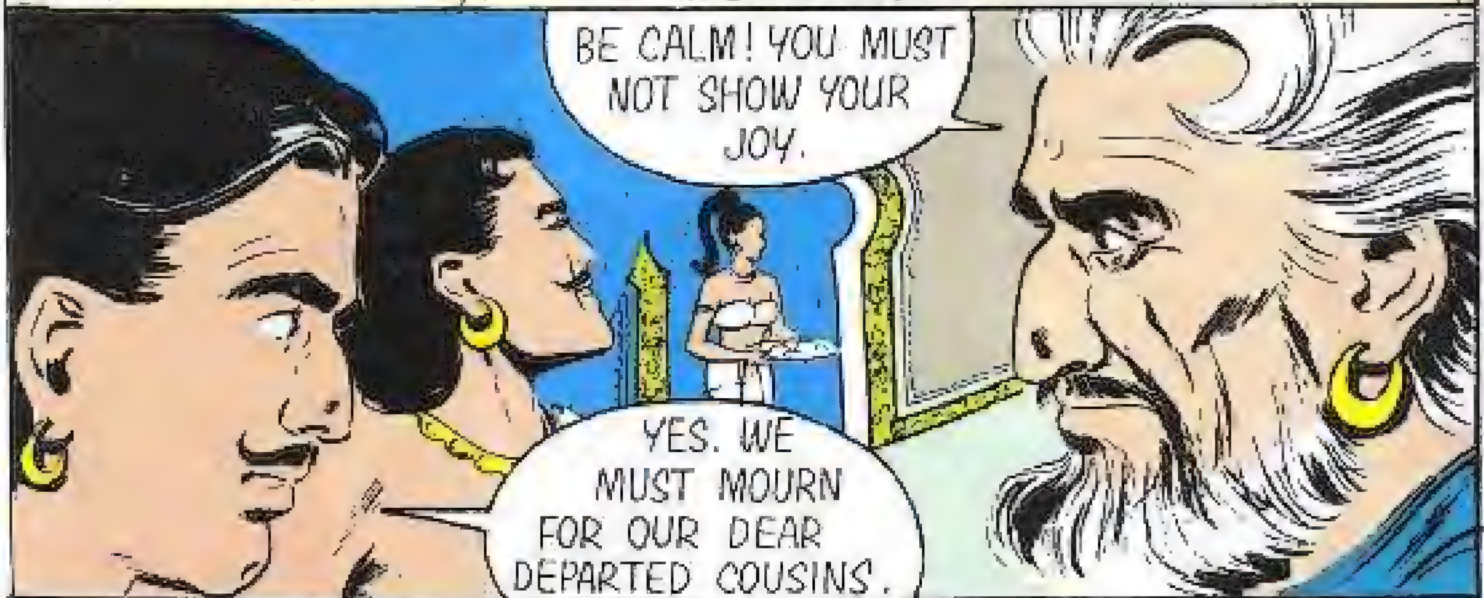

ONE DAY–
I AM A MINER! ACHARYA VIDURA HAS SENT ME TO HELP YOU.
THANK YOU.


THE MINER HAS DONE A GOOD JOB OF THIS TUNNEL.


AT LAST—
WE COULDN'T WAIT FOR PUROCHANA TO SET FIRE TO IT.
LET US GO INTO THE TUNNEL QUICKLY!


THERE! THAT'S THE EXIT. WE SHALL SOON BE SAFE IN THE FOREST!


IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, THE WHOLE PALACE WAS REDUCED TO ASHES. PUROCHANA WAS BURNT ALIVE IN THE TRAP WHICH HE HIMSELF HAD SET.
WHAT A BLAZE!
THE POOR PANDAVAS! THEY MUST ALL HAVE BEEN BURNT!
WAS IT REALLY AN ACCIDENT?


WHEN THE NEWS REACHED HASTINAPURA, DURYODHANA AND DUHSHASANA WERE HAPPY. SHAKUNI, THEIR WICKED UNCLE, CAUTIONED THEM.
BE CALM! YOU MUST NOT SHOW YOUR JOY.
YES. WE MUST MOURN FOR OUR DEAR DEPARTED COUSINS.


MEANWHILE, THE PANDAVAS, VERY MUCH ALIVE, TRUDGED THROUGH THE JUNGLE. WHEN KUNTI COULD WALK NO LONGER, BHEEMA CARRIED HER ON HIS SHOULDERS.




HE EVEN TOOK NAKULA AND SAHADEVA ON HIS HIPS.


LATE IN THE EVENING, THE NEXT DAY, THEY REACHED THE RIVER GANGA.
GREETINGS FROM ACHARYA VIDURA. HE ASKED ME TO WAIT FOR YOU.


AFTER CROSSING THE RIVER, THEY ENTERED A DENSE FOREST.
I CAN'T WALK ANY FURTHER!


THEY LAY DOWN TO REST. BHEEMA ALONE STAYED AWAKE.
THIS WATER WILL REFRESH THEM. I WILL REMAIN AWAKE AND GUARD THEM.


FOR MANY DAYS THEY WANDERED. UP AND DOWN THE HILLS, THEY TREKKED. AT LAST IT SEEMED THAT THEY WERE NEAR SOME HUMAN HABITATION.
THERE! LET US GO AND ASK THEM FOR FOOD AND SHELTER!
NO, NAKULA! DON'T YOU SEE- THEY ARE RAKSHASAS!!


BUT THE RAKSHASAS WERE SOON ON THEIR TRAIL. BHEEMA FACED THEM WITH AN UPROOTED TREE.


HIDAMBASURA, THE RAKSHASA CHIEF, STEPPED FORWARD AND TRIED TO SNATCH THE TREE FROM BHEEMA'S HAND.


A FIERCE DUEL FOLLOWED...


... IN WHICH HIDIMBASURA WAS KILLED.


SOON—


THEY WANT YOU TO GO WITH THEM AND BE THEIR KING.

THE PANDAVAS ACCOMPANIED THEM TO THEIR VILLAGE AND THERE BHEEMA MARRIED HIDIMBAA THE SISTER OF HIDIMBA.









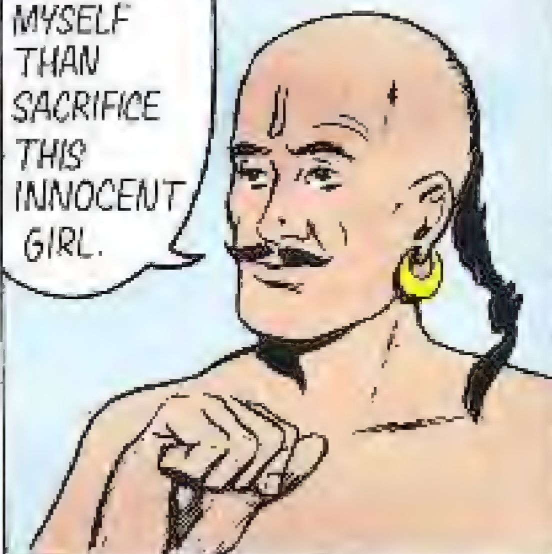


IN EKACHAKRAPURA, THE PANDAVAS LIVED IN THE HOUSE OF A POOR BRAHMAN. ONE DAY–



"HE HAS EXTRACTED TERMS UNDER WHICH PEOPLE HAVE TO SEND HIM A CART-LOAD OF FOOD EVERY DAY. HE EATS THE DRIVER AND BULLOCKS ALSO, ALONG WITH THE FOOD."

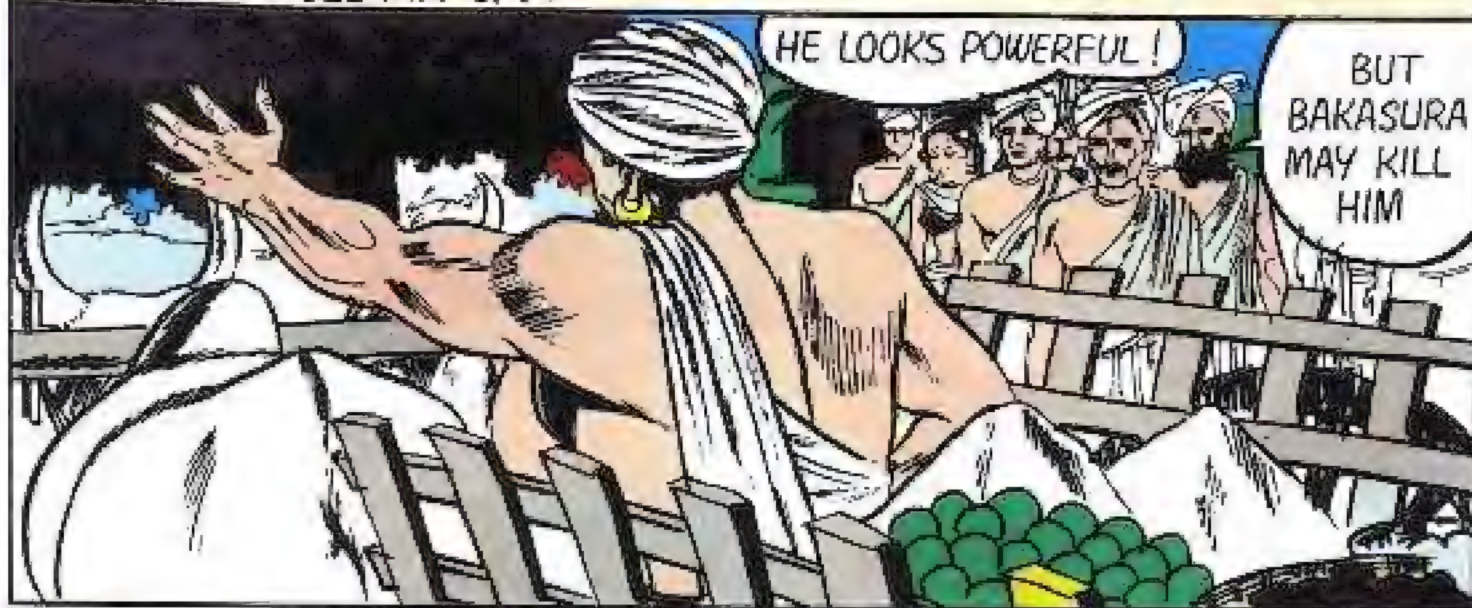








BHEEMA DROVE THE CART OF FOOD TO THE BORDER OF THE TOWN. PEOPLE FLOCKED TO SEE HIM OFF.



WHEN BHEEMA REACHED THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE, HE UNYOKED THE OXEN AND SAT DOWN TO A HEARTY MEAL



WHEN BAKASURA CAME OUT OF THE CAVE, HE WAS ENRAGED AT WHAT HE SAW.



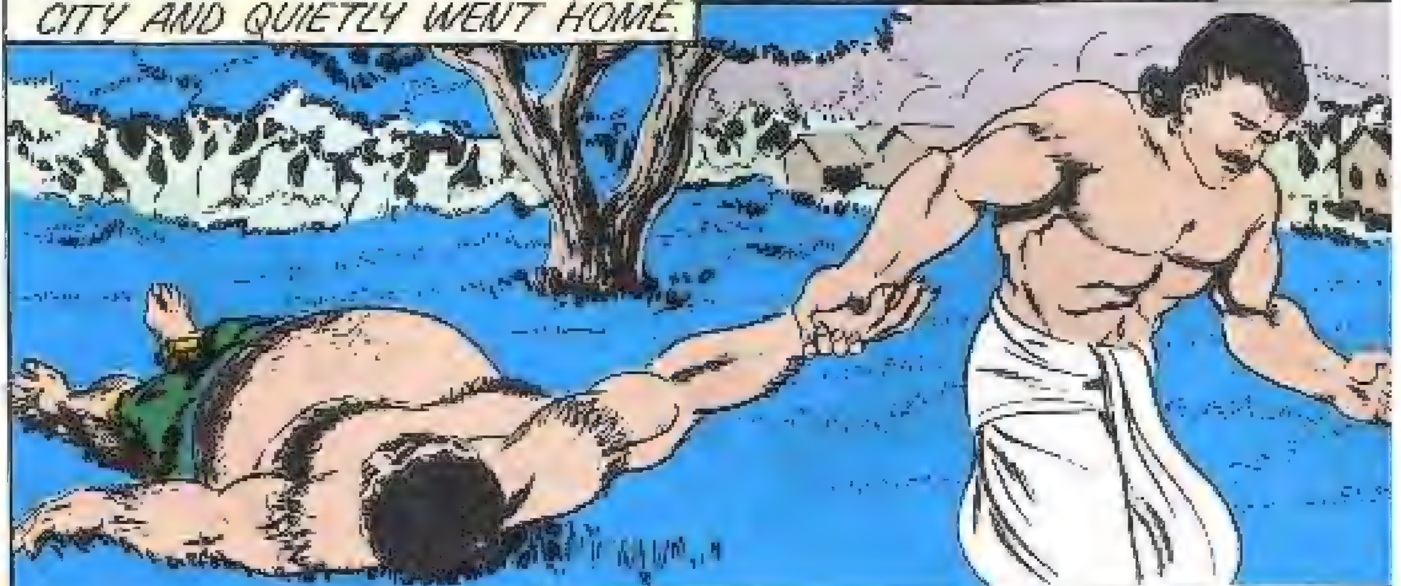


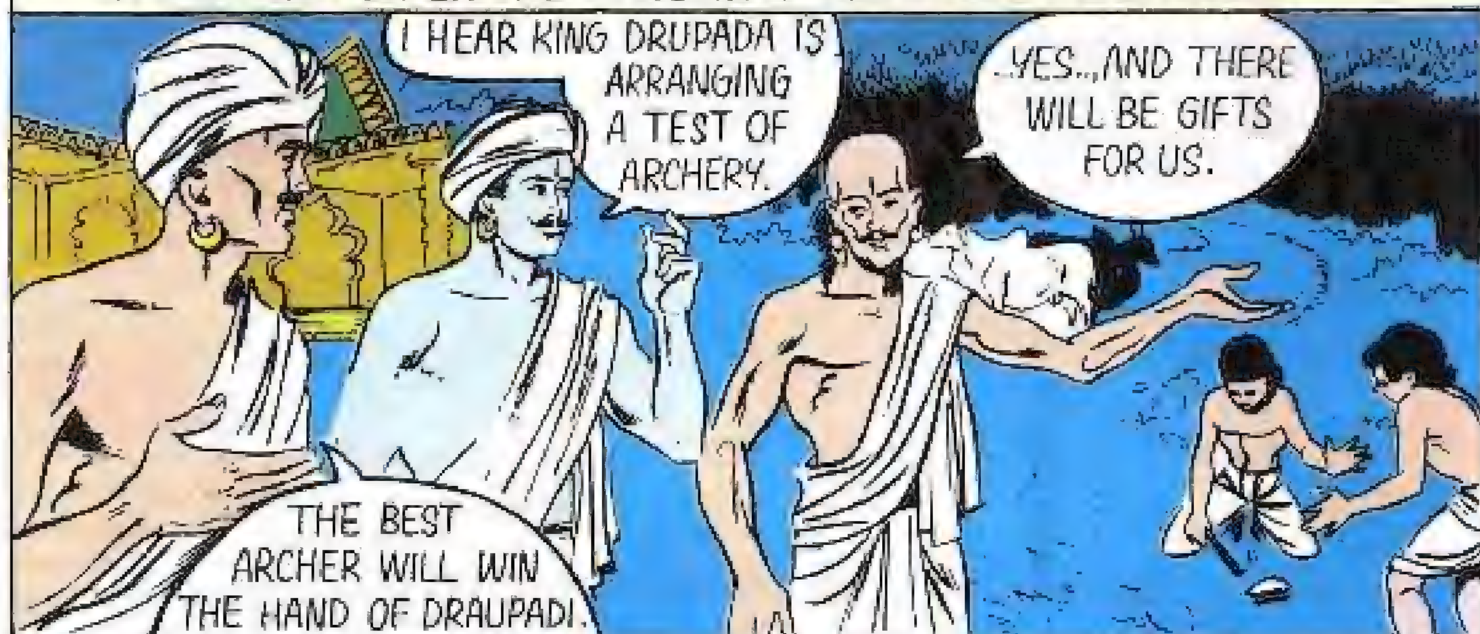

OH! IT IS THE RAKSHASA! HE IS BECOMING A NUISANCE.


THIS POT OF BUTTE MILK TAST GOOD.


AFTER THE MEAL BHEEMA LIFTED THE GIANT AND HURLED HIM VIOLENTLY ON THE GROUND.


BAKASU DIED ON THE SPO


BHEEMA DRAGGED THE DEAD BODY OF THE GIANT TO THE GATE OF T
CITY AND QUIETLY WENT HOME.


A FEW DAYS LATER THE PANDAVAS HEARD EXCITING NEWS—
I HEAR KING DRUPADA IS ARRANGING A TEST OF ARCHERY.
THE BEST ARCHER WILL WIN THE HAND OF DRAUPADI.
..YES...AND THERE WILL BE GIFTS FOR US.


MOTHER! MAY WE GO AND ATTEND THE MARRIAGE?
YES, ARJUNA.


THE PANDAVAS SOON REACHED THE CAPITAL WHICH WAS GAILY DECORATED.


IN THE PALACE HALL, HUNDREDS OF PRINCES WERE SEATED. THE PANDAVAS TOOK THEIR SEATS IN THE ENCLOSURE MEANT FOR BRAHMANS.
THIS IS DHRISHTADYUMNA, THE BROTHER OF DRAUPADI, INTRODUCING THE GUESTS.
THIS, MY SISTER, IS KING SHISHUPALA OF CHEDI.

THE INTRODUCTIONS OVER, DHRISHTADYUMNA ANNOUNCED—



THE PRINCES TRIED ONE AFTER ANOTHER BUT NONE COULD LIFT THE HEAVY BOW.



DURYODHANA FELL TO THE GROUND WHEN HE TRIED TO LIFT THE BOW. LORD KRISHNA LOOKED MEANINGFULLY AT ARJUNA, HIS COUSIN.



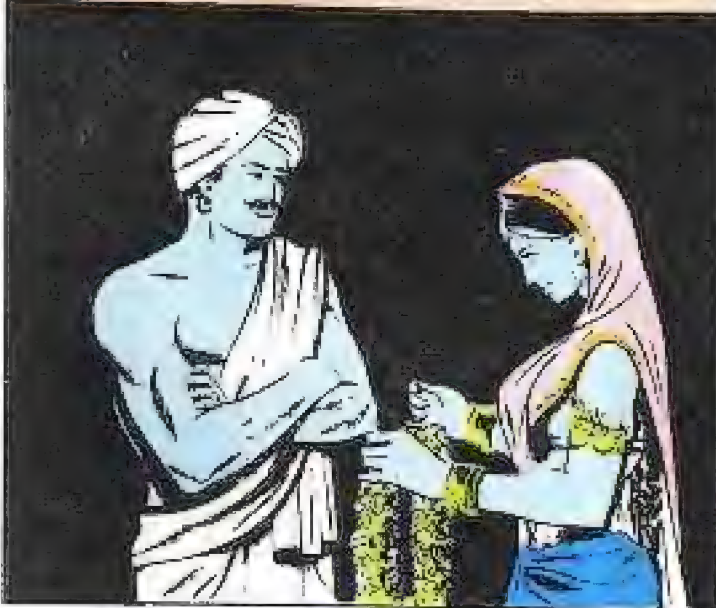


ARJUNA GOT UP FROM THE ENCLOSURE OF BRAHMANS.

WITH THE PERMISSION OF DHRISHTADYUMNA, HE LIFTED THE BOW, STRUNG IT, AND SENT FIVE ARROWS IN QUICK SUCCESSION.



DRAUPADI GARLANDED HIM.



THERE WAS AN UPROAR IN THE HALL.



MANY OF THE PRINCES RUSHED TO THE DAIS. BHEEMA CAME TO HELP ARJUNA.

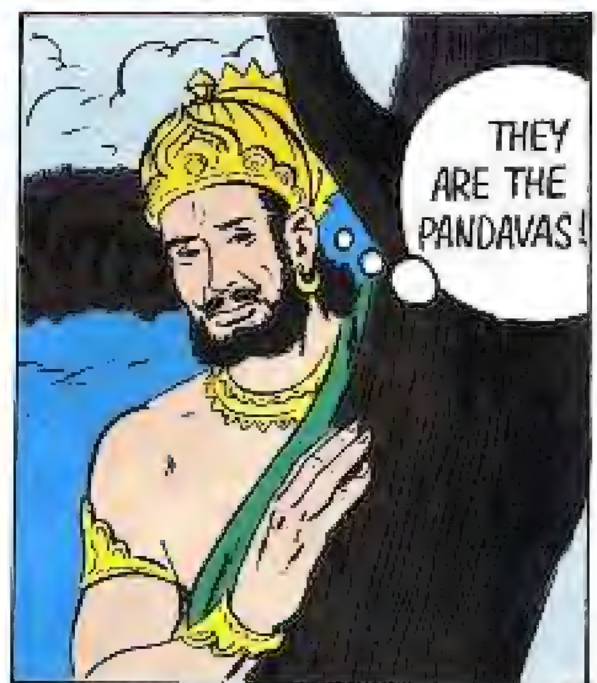


IN THE CONFUSION THAT FOLLOWED, ARJUNA AND HIS BROTHERS WITH THE NEWLY-WON-BRIDE, LEFT FOR EKACHAKRAPURA. KING DRUPADA, HOWEVER, WAS WORRIED.

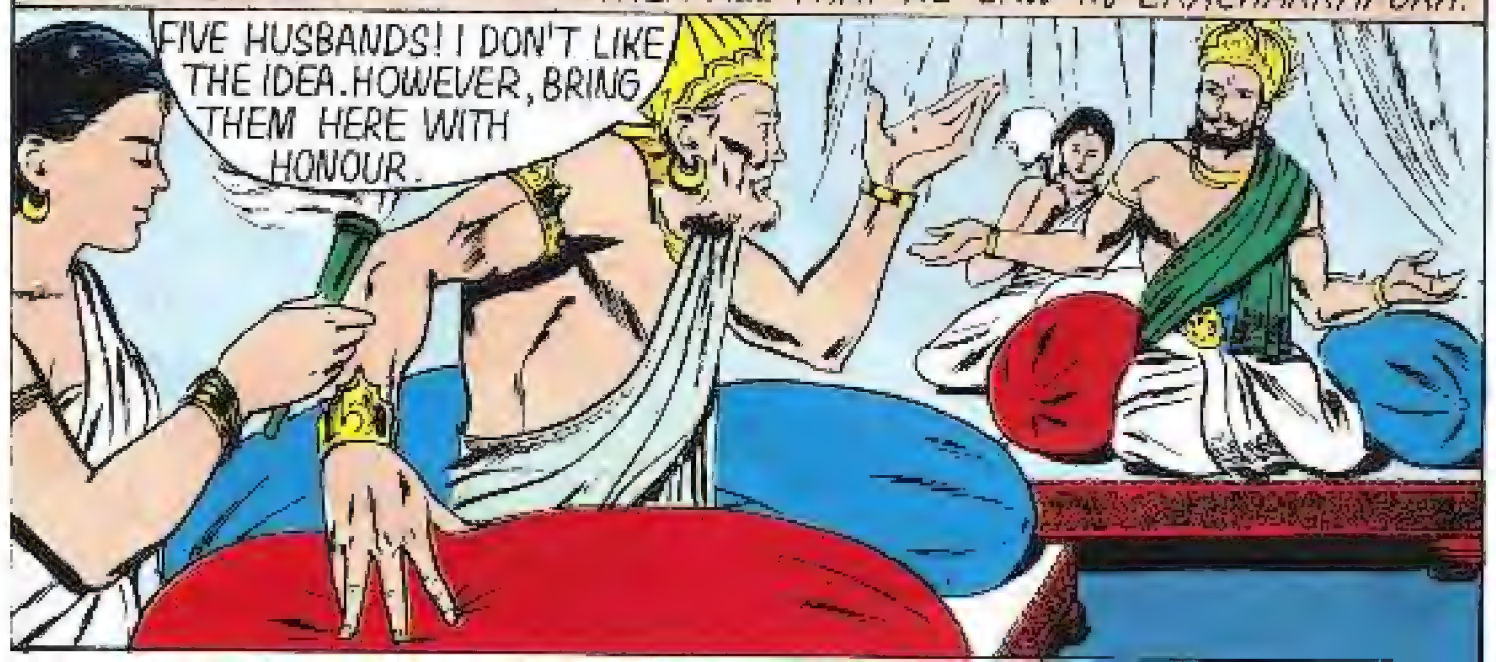


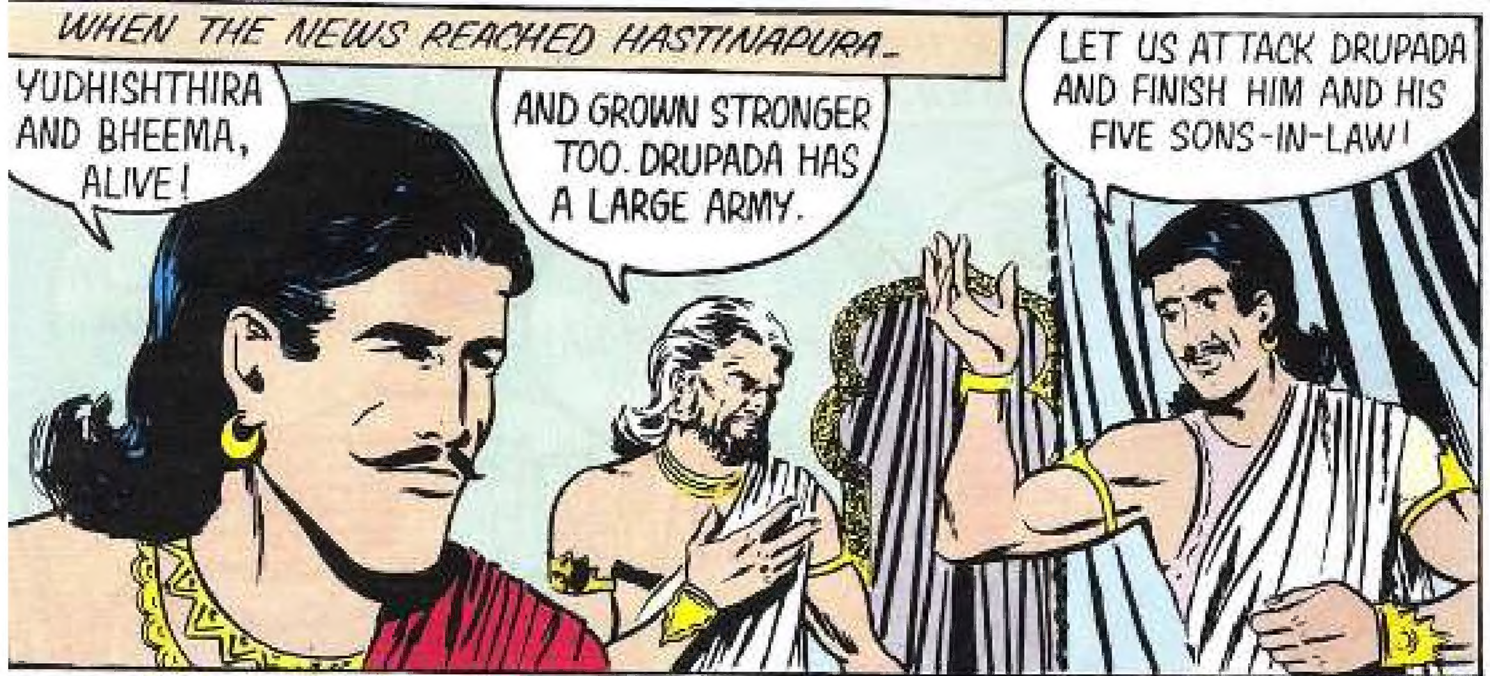
ARJUNA WAS EAGER TO BREAK THE NEWS TO HIS MOTHER.

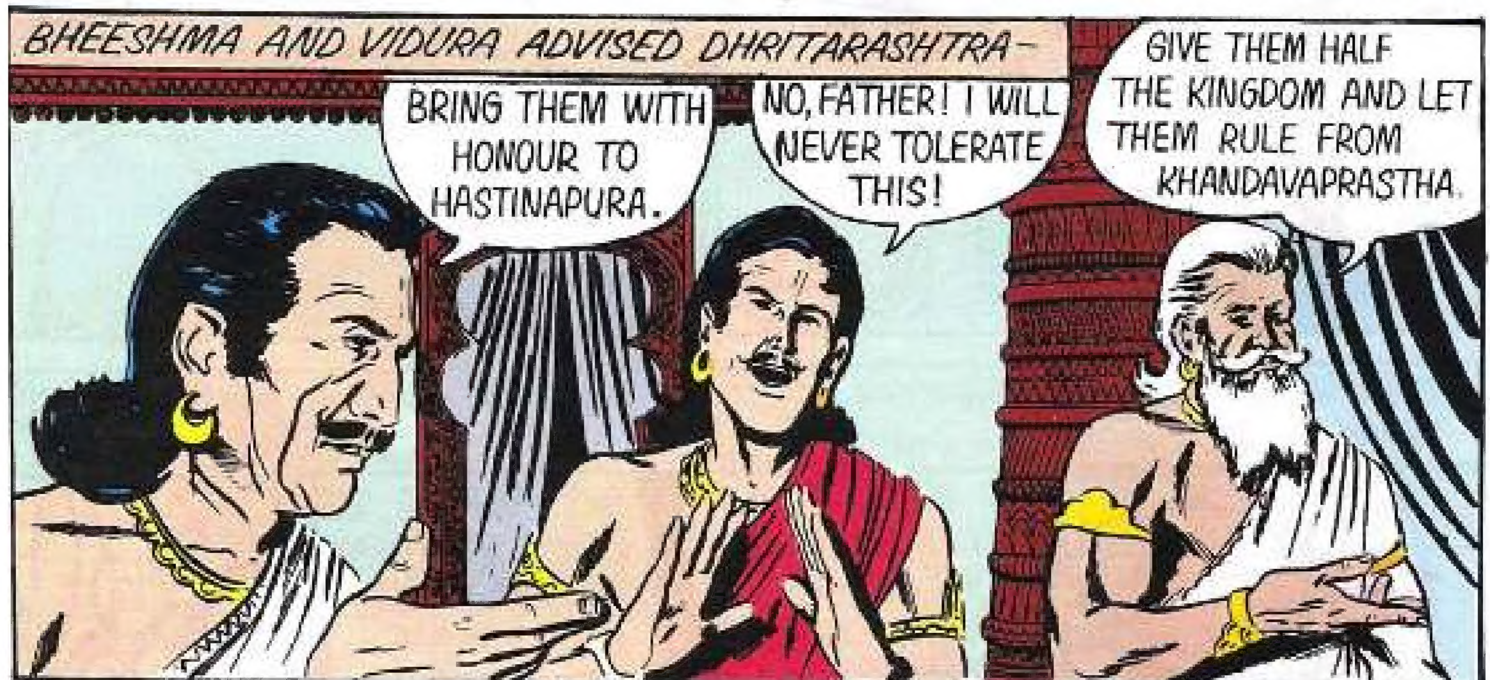




DHRISHTADYUMNA TOLD HIS FATHER ALL THAT HE SAW IN EKACHAKRAPURA.




WHEN THE NEWS REACHED HASTINAPURA—
YUDHISHTHIRA AND BHEEMA, ALIVE!
AND GROWN STRONGER TOO. DRUPADA HAS A LARGE ARMY.
LET US ATTACK DRUPADA AND FINISH HIM AND HIS FIVE SONS-IN-LAW!


BHEESHMA AND VIDURA ADVISED DHRITARASHTRA—
BRING THEM WITH HONOUR TO HASTINAPURA.
NO, FATHER! I WILL NEVER TOLERATE THIS!
GIVE THEM HALF THE KINGDOM AND LET THEM RULE FROM KHANDAVAPRASTHA.

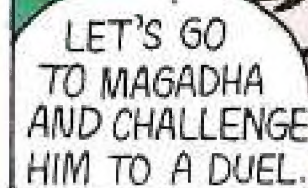

I HATE THEM! I HATE THEM!! I WANT TO RUN AWAY FROM HERE.
PLEASE PUT ON A SMILE! WE MUST PRETEND TO WELCOME THEM.
THE PANDAVAS WERE INVITED TO HASTINAPURA

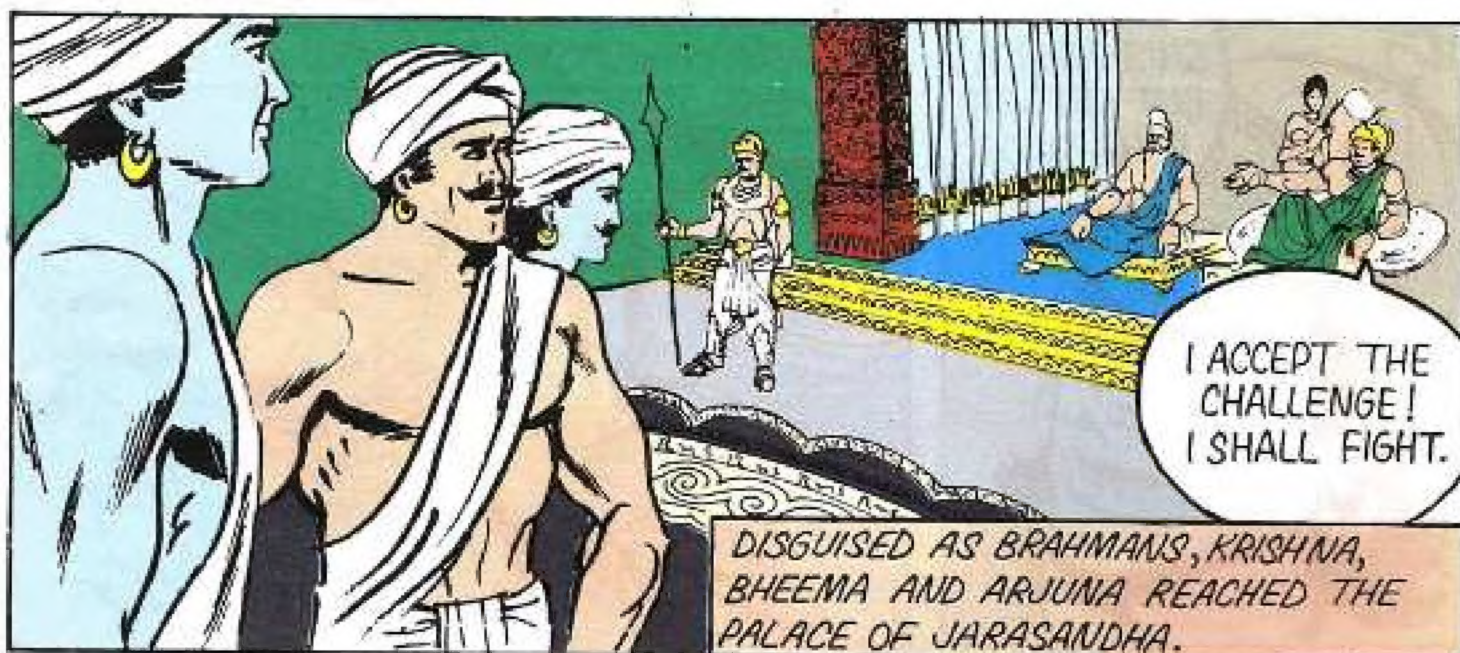
A FEW DAYS AFTER THEIR TRIUMPHANT RETURN, THE PANDAVAS LEFT FOR KHANDAVAPRASTHA TO BUILD A NEW CITY.

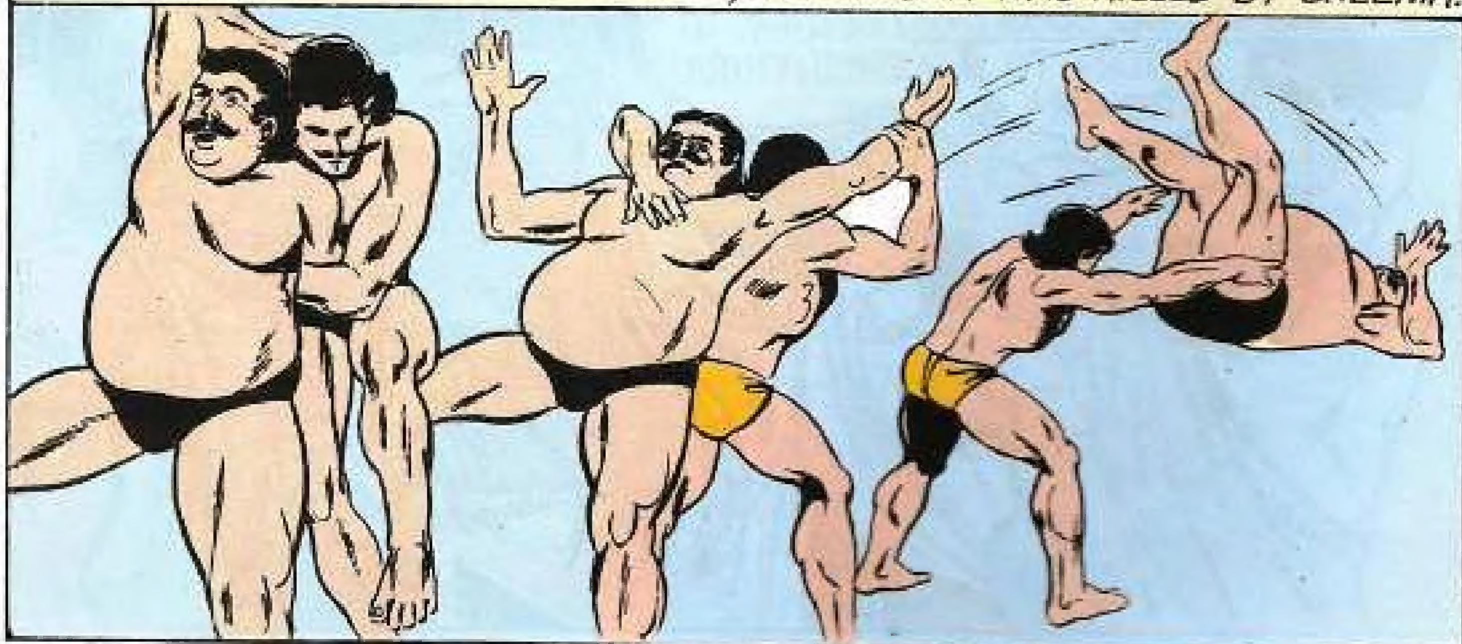
THEY RULED FROM INDRAPRASTHA FOR MANY YEARS. LORD KRISHNA WAS THEIR FRIEND AND ADVISER. ONE DAY—


ONLY IF YOU DEFEAT THE WICKED KING JARASANDHA WILL OTHER PRINCES ACKNOWLEDGE YOU AS THEIR LEADER.


BUT KRISHNA! HOW CAN WE DEFEAT JARASANDHA?


LET'S GO TO MAGADHA AND CHALLENGE HIM TO A DUEL.


DISGUISED AS BRAHMANS, KRISHNA, BHEEMA AND ARJUNA REACHED THE PALACE OF JARASANDHA.
I ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE! I SHALL FIGHT.


IN THE FIERCE FIGHT THAT FOLLOWED, JARASANDHA WAS KILLED BY BHEEMA.

BHEEMA RETURNED IN TRIUMPH TO INDRAPRASTHA. KINGS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY GATHERED TO ATTEND THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE BUT–







